

## Abstract

The present invention relates to compositions comprising one or more  
connective tissue derived polypeptides having a molecular weight of less than  
30,000Da that are capable of tolerising individuals to antigenic components of  
cartilage and prevent the appearance of and/or treat symptoms of arthritis and  
5 other musculoskeletal degenerative conditions. The present invention provides  
methods for recovering polypeptides having a molecular weight of less than  
30,000Da from connective tissue and having anti-arthritic or anti-inflammatory  
activity. The present invention further relates to compositions comprising a  
polypeptide containing an NC4 domain of collagen type IX alpha 1 chain or  
10 fragment thereof, having a molecular weight of less than 30,000Da, where the  
polypeptide is capable of tolerising individuals to antigenic components of  
cartilage, preventing the appearance of arthritic symptoms, and/or treating the  
symptoms of arthritis.

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